

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 EB-07

OMB-01 /076 W

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R 131216Z JUN 75

FM AMCONSUL BELFAST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 955

INFO AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USNAVCOMMSTA LONDONDERRY

UNCLAS BELFAST 203

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, U.K. (N.I.)

SUBJECT: CONVENTION - DEBATE MOVES FROM RULES TO SUBSTANCE

REF: BELFAST 191

1. NORTHERN IRELAND CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION FINISHED DEBATING AND APPROVED 19 PROPOSED RULES JUNE 12. LONG, SPIRITED AND SOMEWHAT CONFUSED DEBATE OVER FORM AND CONTENT FINAL CONVENTION REPORT TO WESTMINSTER ENDED WITH 41-26 VOTE REFLECTING UNITED ULSTER UNIONIST COALITION (UUUC) MAJORITY OVER SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC AND LABOUR PARTY (SDLP), ALLIANCE PARTY, UNIONIST PARTY NORTHERN IRELAND (UPNI) AND ONE MEMBER NORTHERN IRELAND LABOUR PARTY (NILP). IN ESSENCE, RULE ESTABLISHES ONE FINAL REPORT BUT LEAVES OPEN QUESTION OF HOW OR WHETHER MINORITY OR DISSENTING VIEWS WILL BE INCLUDED. IN COURSE THIS DEBATE SDLP MEMBER PADDY DEVLIN SUGGESTED AS EMERGENCY MATTER INTERIM CONVENTION REPORT ON SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC MATTERS. SUGGESTION RECEIVED QUALIFIED APPROVAL REVEREND IAN PAISLEY AND OTHER LOYALISTS.

2. CONVENTION WILL RESUME JUNE 17 TO DEBATE FIRST

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MOTION WHICH SDLP SUBMISSION LARGELY REFLECTING WORDING

OF ACT. MOTION CALLS FOR CONVENTION DEVISE SYSTEM  
GOVERNMENT FOR NORTHERN IRELAND WHICH WILL HAVE MOST  
WIDESPREAD ACCEPTANCE AND REJECTS VIOLENCE FOR ANY SOURCE.  
LITTLE OPPOSITION TO MOTION FORESEEN.

3. ATMOSPHERE AND LEVEL DEBATE GENERALLY POSITIVE THIS WEEK AS BEFORE (REFTEL). "BACKBENCHERS" MADE MAIDEN SPEECHES AND THERE SOME MINOR WAVING OF HISTORICAL BLOODY SHIRT. POSSIBLY MORE IMPORTANT THAN CONVENTION PROCEEDINGS WERE DISCUSSION MEETINGS UUUC LEADERS HELD SEPARATELY WITH SDLP AND ALLIANCE LEADERS. UUUC AND SDLP MET PRIVATELY TWICE DURING LAST TEN DAYS AND IT BELIEVED THEY AGREED: (A) AVOID INTRODUCTION CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES BEFORE SUMMER ADJOURNMENT JULY 3, (B) EXTEND SUMMER BREAK FOR TWO WEEKS TO AUG. 14, (C) CONTINUE PRIVATE DISCUSSIONS DURING RECESS.

4. IRISH NEWS, TRADITIONALLY AND DEFENSIVELY PESSIMISTIC, JOINED IRISH TIMES AND DAILY TELEGRAPH (LONDON) IN EXPRESSIONS CAUTIOUS OPTIMISM ABOUT CONVENTION. RESTRAINT IN DEBATE, MEETINGS DESCRIBED ABOVE, SUGGESTION FROM OFFICIAL UNIONISTS THAT "COUNCIL OF BRITISH ISLES" COULD SATISFY DIVERSE ASPIRATIONS AND TABLING OF MOTION CALLING FOR BILL OF RIGHTS ALL HELPING FEED THIS OPTIMISM.

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